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Body

It may be off a few words as I am calling this up from my sadly senescent memory, but I'd like to cite Samuel Johnson's surely arch comment on a certain sport. Said he, whom the world in his own day called The Great Cham: "It is very strange, and very melancholy, that the paucity of human pleasures should persuade us ever to call hunting one of them."

I would repurpose that in these fall days of 2021 as I read all the news from Europe, of petrol shortages, swiftly rising fuel costs, extreme lineups at British gas stations, brawls breaking out at the pumps, Germany already shuddering at the possibility of a cold winter and not enough heating fuel, half the continent now on a leash to Russia's Vladimir Putin and his gas line, plus the ever ready sultans of the Middle East musing about either raising prices or cutting supply.

My version goes: It is a melancholy observation that the paucity of common sense and the excess of folly in so many politicians has ever persuaded sovereign governments that they should subscribe to the nonsense and economically suicidal policies of "net-zero" emission and the quixotic idea that windmills and solar panels can service First World economies.

Not having the capacity for Johnson's pithiness, I would add that a world which offers headlines to the sour, shallow sermons of a whining teenager is in desperate need of intellectual repair.

The cost of this green obsession that has mesmerized so many of influence and power over the past two decades may soon show up in its harshest form - old people in cold rooms, interrupted power in major cities, and the need to bend the knee to the Russian president.

The word green has to be redefined. It is not a sweet Wordsworthian halo. In our real and present world, green politics mean the crippling of efficient and ready systems in the vain hope of wand-waving into existence an entirely new energy system.

It means following the prescriptions and diktat mentality of one-issue ideologues to build what their rhapsodic minds consider policies for a brave new green world. It is a calamitous vision. Which to follow, will mean hardships for the most vulnerable, a degrading of the way of life for millions, and a choke point for those countries whose economies are just now beginning to offer the very poorest citizens of our world a glimpse of comfort, security and reasonable health standards.

There is no keener signature of an adolescent mind than gluing oneself to a highway barricade while believing your adhesive activism is going to save the planet. This is Extinction Rebellion's tactic in current day London, England. In Canada there is no keener signature of a reckless disregard for the nation's stability, and full dis-concern for

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Western Canadians, than utilizing the snobbish, condescending slogan "the planet comes first" as the cover for choking the economy of one of our provinces.

As always, it is necessary to emphasize that if oil were the principal resource in Ontario, it would be protected, and if it were the principal resource in Quebec, it would have state and religious protection. Everyone out West knows this. It is becoming a harder and harder question why Alberta stays in the Confederation, not that the Confederation idea or Confederation itself is a question in Albertan minds.

Alberta is turning to questioning Confederation because Ottawa has become so warped and careless in its attention to Alberta's central industry, and by easy implication to the dignity of the citizens of that province. To some degree it sees itself as being on a "second tier" of Confederation, and its energy industry as being offered as a sacrifice to win the approval of the IPCC, international greenism and Hollywood worthies - hardly a comfortable political mindset.

The most remarkable thing in our current moment is not that there are rumblings of discontent out West. It is the remarkable patience the West has maintained during the decades-long attacks internationalist environmentalism has carried out against Alberta, while Ottawa at best has complacently looked on. Alberta is a second citizen in the Confederation, and very many of its residents are reluctantly waking up to that fact.

There's another one of those ridiculous, multi-thousand-attendee global warming conferences about to choke the airways and fill the first-class beds of Glasgow, Scotland. Thousands will once again gather to draw up the latest decrees and issue fresh Jeremiahs about the always threatened **doom** just around the corner. It will be another private-jet convocation where superior people, with no need to worry about furnace fuel or life in the Third World or having to line up in a gas station queue, will meet to tell the peasants of the world how they should live from now on.

They shall talk of building back better, and just transitions, and our glowing net-zero future. Canada, with what little prestige it has left, will be there trying to be the loudest in supporting such manifest follies. Everyone attending should say a prayer Europe doesn't have a hard winter, though maybe the prayer is a little late.

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Graphic

Justin Tallis, Afp Via Getty Images Files; An Extinction Rebellion **climate** activist sits in the street with an anti-fossil-fuel message in central London. Expecting such tactics to save the world is the signature of an adolescent mind, says columnist Rex Murphy.;

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